



Traveling to New Zealand With Food Allergies

Food allergies don't have to stop you from traveling. Whether traveling for business or pleasure, careful preparation and communication will help make your trip safe and enjoyable. This guide provides some helpful tips for traveling to New Zealand as well as information on understanding food labels and dining out at restaurants.

Medication

Bring a kit with all your medications, including extra epinephrine/adrenaline auto-injectors. Also carry an Emergency Care Plan that outlines recommended treatment in case of an allergic reaction, is signed by a physician and includes emergency contact information. You can download a copy of FARE's Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan at foodallergy.org/faap. Be sure to bring extra copies with you and keep your plan in a place where others can find it. It is important that you and your travel companions understand what to do in case of an emergency.

EpiPen® is the only brand of auto-injector currently available in New Zealand and can be purchased from pharmacies without a prescription. However, you will need authorization from the pharmacist, so you may still want to ask your doctor to write prescriptions for you to carry.

Understand policies for carrying medication on board the aircraft. According to the Transportation Security Agency (TSA), which handles airport security in the U.S., passengers are allowed to carry their epinephrine in the aircraft cabin. However, you may need to show the printed label that identifies the medication. It is recommended that you also show the prescription label from the pharmacy. Have your doctor complete a Travel Plan that confirms your food allergy and travel requirements. The Travel Plan of the International Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Alliance may be downloaded at foodallergy.org/travelplan.

Emergencies

ADMINISTER EPINEPHRINE AND DIAL 1-1-1

Always keep your epinephrine with you and easily accessible in the event of an emergency. Let your travel companions know about your allergies so they know what to do in case of an emergency and where your auto-injectors are located.

In the event of an emergency, administer epinephrine immediately. It is critical not to delay administering epinephrine. Next, contact emergency services for an ambulance transport to the nearest hospital emergency department by calling 1-1-1. Not all ambulances are equipped with epinephrine/adrenaline so be sure to inform the dispatcher that epinephrine/adrenaline may be needed. It is important to remain at the hospital for at least four hours of observation because symptoms may return.

Familiarize yourself with the local emergency services phone number and dialing procedures. For example, some hotels may have specific procedures for dialing 1-1-1 from your room. Be aware of your location so that you can give the dispatcher specific information. Also, familiarize yourself with where the nearest emergency department is located.

New Zealand has a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week, no-fault comprehensive injury coverage through the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC). This covers the cost of treatment for accidental emergencies. Emergency treatment for anaphylaxis to a known trigger may be included. For more information, go to acc.co.nz/making-a-claim/am-i-covered/index.htm.

Understanding New Zealand Food Labels

Reading food labels on packaged food is an important part of managing food allergies and avoiding your allergen. Food allergen labeling requirements are defined in the **Food Standards Australia New Zealand Food Code** (FSANZ) and are regulated in New Zealand through the **2014 Food Act**. These require that the labels on prepackaged foods must declare nine major food allergens if present in any amount as an ingredient or a processing aid. Added sulphites must be declared if at or above 10 milligrams per kilogram. The Code requires only that these allergens be declared in the ingredients list. However, industry guidelines recommend a separate 'Contains' statement also be used, 'May contain' statements are voluntary. Some highly refined ingredients are exempt from declaration requirements.

- cereals containing gluten • shellfish (crustacea) • eggs • fish • peanuts • soybeans • milk • sesame seeds •
- tree nuts other than coconut • added sulphites in concentrations of 10 mg/kg or more •



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Snacks and Meals

It is recommended that you travel with non-perishable food that is safe for you to eat in case you are unable to find allergen-free foods while traveling. Good options include dried pasta and snack bars that are free of your allergen. If you plan on staying in a hotel, consider staying in one that has a small kitchen or a refrigerator and microwave to store and prepare safe meals and snacks. Carefully clean all utensils, equipment and surfaces before first use. You may be able to purchase some of the same products in New Zealand as you can back home, but remember that the same product manufactured in different countries can contain different ingredients.

Dining Out at Restaurants

From March 2016, new businesses selling non-pre-packed food (e.g. restaurants, caterers, takeaways) must also comply with the Food Code and provide allergen information to consumers on request. All businesses will have to comply by mid-2017.

When you are dining out with food allergies, planning ahead is important. Consider choosing chain restaurants. Each restaurant is likely to use the same ingredients and prepare foods the same way, and a growing number are allergy-aware. Before you go to the restaurant, there are some steps you can take to see if a particular restaurant is a good choice for you. Many restaurants have websites and post their menus online for you to review ahead of time. You can also call the restaurant and ask to speak to the chef or manager about your food allergies, menu items and meal preparation. We recommend calling during off-peak hours.

Communication between restaurants and customers with food allergies is essential to a safe dining experience. The restaurant manager and wait staff should know about your food allergy. Remind a manager or the head waiter about your allergies before you are seated. In addition to asking questions about the ingredients and preparation methods, carry a "chef card" that outlines the foods you must avoid. Present the card to the chef or manager for review.

Chef cards can be downloaded in English and nine other languages at foodallergy.org/diningout.

When selecting your meal, keep it simple. If you have to ask complicated questions about the items on a menu, simple fare may be the safest. Be sure to ask what is in your dish and how it is prepared. It is important that the restaurant understands what you are allergic to and takes steps to avoid cross-contact. You may want to speak to the manager and the chef, just to be sure.

Remember, never be embarrassed if you feel you are not communicating effectively. If you think a member of the wait staff does not understand your situation, always trust your instincts and seek out another staff member or manager. Sometimes, the safest choice is to avoid eating, and find a safe meal somewhere else.

Resources – USA

Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan:
foodallergy.org/faap

Epinephrine Auto-Injectors: foodallergy.org/epinephrine

Find an Emergency Department: ushospitalfinder.com/

Reading Food Labels: www.foodallergy.org/foodlabels

Dining Out: safefare.org/for-diners

International Travel Plan: foodallergy.org/travelplan

Resources – New Zealand

Allergy New Zealand (Information and Support): allergy.org.nz

ASCIA (Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy)
Anaphylaxis Action & Travel Plans: allergy.org.au

Accident Compensation Corporation (Anaphylaxis Emergency Claims):
acc.co.nz/making-a-claim/am-i-covered/index.htm

Emergency Services in New Zealand:
newzealandnow.govt.nz/living-in-nz/safety/emergency-services



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